

\*----= ST REPORT INTERNATIONAL ONLINE MAGAZINE =====\*

"The Original 16/32bit Online Magazine"  
from  
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> 06/07/91: STReport #7.23 The Original 16/32 bit Online Magazine!

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- The Editor's Desk - CPU REPORT - ATARI'S FUTURE  
- STALKER 3 NEWS! - STENO RELEASED! - ATARI # 1!  
- AlberTT Released! - UNIX & TT030! - 2MB FLOPPY  
- SPARCbook Overview - FSM GDOS NEWS - STR Confidential

-\* PAGESTREAM 2 RELEASE IMMINENT! \*-  
-\* ATARI SELLS FACTORY! \*-  
-\* BIG SHAKEUP AFOOT! \*-

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ST REPORT INTERNATIONAL ONLINE MAGAZINE ¢

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-\* FEATURING \*-

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STReport's support BBS, NODE 350, invites systems using Forem ST and Turbo Board BBS to participate in the Fido/F-Net Mail Network. Or, call Node 350 direct at 904-786-4176, and enjoy the excitement of exchanging information relative to the Atari ST computer arena through an excellent International ST Mail Network. All registered F-NET - Crossnet SysOps are welcome to join the STReport Crossnet Conference. The Crossnet Conference Code is #34813, and the "Lead Node" is # 350. All systems are welcome and invited to actively participate. Support Atari Computers; Join Today!

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AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY ON: GENIE ~ CIS ~ DELPHI ~ BIX ~ FIDO ~ F-NET

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> The Editor's Podium

"To each his own!" Isn't the right to choose wonderful? "Variety is the spice of life!" How true. If everything were similar, things would be sure be BORING. Recently comments have been made concerning STReport's carrying information pertaining to the "other" computer platforms. The comments ranged from ..."make it smaller", "...drop the added coverage", "make it like..."

STReport has been presenting IBM/MAC coverage in its issues well before it dawned upon anyone that it just might be interesting to some of the readers. Especially those who own and operate successful emulators like GCR and Supercharger. All of our coverage is geared to bring to the Atari user the BEST of information throughout the computing community that may have an effect on our future. We may, from time to time, "trim the fat" but for sure... we will continue to be "different" and provide full coverage in one publication.

STReport made the decision to only support the current Atari computer platform and not move directly into other systems. We do however, carry a "digest" of the happenings in the other marketplaces in a genuine effort to keep the ST user well informed.

Its great to see a "pioneer" such as Jay Craswell (moniterm card) developing and releasing a super video card that supports the MSTE/TT030 VME bus. Congratulations Jay! The VME bus has literally hundreds of cards already made and ready to purchase and use in our machines. For some time, Atarians have clamored for a "standard expansion bus". We now have it in the VME bus that's in the MEGA STE and the TT030. STReport is fully behind those who support development using the VME bus. Full information is elsewhere in this issue about Jay's new board.

Also in this issue, STALKER 3 & STENO information. Gribnif Software also pioneers in their own right, famous for Neodesk, will market Eric Rosenquist's fine programming efforts.

Thank you for your strong support,

Ralph.....

For the record.....

Recently, (AtariUser-6/91), therein appeared an item written by Nathan Potechin detailing the beginnings of the IAAD, unfortunately, there were some "minor" points of information missing. STReport called Gordon Monnier (a founder and original Board member) to ask a few questions and verify the information on hand. This basically covers the omissions.

In the weeks prior to the WAACE show of Sept. 1989, STReport's Michael Arthur discussed the formation of a developer representation group with Gordon Monnier of MichTron Software. It was subsequently agreed that an organizational meeting would be held at WAACE for the purpose of getting a formal developer representation group off the ground. That meeting,

spoken of by N. Potechin in his article, was held in my (Ralph Mariano) hotel room at WAACE/'89. Believe me, the room was packed. Prior to the meeting, Michael Arthur and Gordon worked together for about 6 weeks to get the meeting agreed upon, scheduled and attended. For approximately 8 to 10 months thereafter, Gordon and Nathan worked together bringing the IAAD up to full speed. While speaking to Gordon to verify the accuracy of our info Gordon added that, "in all fairness, the IAAD was really the 'brainchild' of STReport's Michael Arthur."

TODAY'S NEWS .. TODAY!

Publisher - Editor

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Ralph F. Mariano

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## IMPORTANT NOTICE

Please, submit letters to the editor, articles, reviews, etc...  
via E-Mail to:

Compuserve.....	70007,4454
GENie.....	ST.REPORT
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WHAT'S NEW IN THE ATARI FORUMS (June 7)

#### FINDING FILES FAST!

During June, explore the many programs and files available in CompuServe's Atari ST Forums with File Finder -- now reduced to \$6 per hour for all baud rates, including 9600. The Atari File Finder includes all files within the Atari Arts Forum, Atari Productivity Forum, and Atari Vendor Forum. Type GO ATARIFF to access this service.

#### ATARI OFFERS BOOTH SPACE FOR DEVELOPERS

Atari is offering free booth space for developers wishing to display their products in the upcoming Dusseldorf show. Atari ST Registered developers should read the file MESSE.TXT now available in LIBRARY 7 ("Registered Developers") of the Atari Productivity Forum (GO ATARIPRO), and Portfolio Developers should read file MESSE.TXT in LIBRARY 9 of the Atari Portfolio Forum (GO APORTFOLIO).

#### MANAGING FILES MADE EASY!

Direct-Drive makes managing the files on your floppy and hard disks simple, quick and painless. With a mouse click you can get a list of every file on a disk that can be saved, searched, sorted and printed. You can also print disk labels, format disks and much more! If you often waste time looking for files or thought you'd never get your disks organized, we think you'll find Direct-Drive indispensable!

Download file DIRDRV.ARC from LIBRARY 1 ("New Uploads") of the Atari Productivity Forum (GO ATARIPRO) for your copy of Direct-Drive.  
Available EXCLUSIVELY for download from the Atari Forums on CompuServe!

#### NEW FROM DOUBLE CLICK SOFTWARE!

DC Mouse Wrapper from Double Click Software will 'wrap' the mouse cursor when you hit the edge of the screen. Go up, and hit the edge of the screen, and mouse goes to the bottom of the screen! Download file DCMRAP-.ARC from LIBRARY 13 of the Atari Vendors Forum (GO ATARIVEN).

Also download file DCSHOW.NEW from LIBRARY 13 of the Atari Vendors Forum (GO ATARIVEN) for information on an easy offer to get DC SHOWER!

## ST WRITER ELITE 4.1!

Version 4.1 of ST WRITER ELITE is now available in LIBRARY 1 ("New Uploads") of the Atari Productivity Forum (GO ATARIPRO). This new version contains one bug fix and one added feature over version 4.0. Download file(s):

STWEL4.ARC - ST Writer Elite 4.1 English Version.

STWELG.ARC - ST Writer Elite 4.1 Word Processor German/Spanish.

## NEW IN ATARI PORTFOLIO FORUM

Custom Base, a program to turn your Portfolio into a data collection device, is now available in LIBRARY 1 of the Atari Portfolio Forum (GO APORTFOLIO).

A copy of the File Manager program, distributed by Atari Corp. with all new Portfolios is now available in LIBRARY 1 of the Atari Portfolio Forum (GO APORTFOLIO) for those who purchased their units before the FM card was included. File provided courtesy of Atari Corp., all rights reserved.

A new version of Don Messerli's PGSHOW and Judy Hamner's Forum Notes report are now available in LIBRARY 1 of the Atari Portfolio Forum (GO APORTFOLIO).

THE ATARI PORTFOLIO FORUM ON COMPUSENSE  
HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AN  
OFFICIAL SUPPORT SITE BY ATARI CORPORATION

"GO APORTFOLIO TO ACCESS THE ATARI PORTFOLIO FORUM"

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> CPU STATUS REPORT  
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LATE BREAKING INDUSTRY-WIDE NEWS

Issue #24

Compiled by: Lloyd E. Pulley, Sr.

- Sunnyvale, California  
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ATARI TO SELL TAIWAN FACILITY

According to Reuter's News Agency, Atari Corporation said it agreed to sell its Taiwan facility for sixty million dollars. The sale, to an undisclosed buyer, is scheduled to close late this month and is contingent upon certain closing conditions being met.

Atari, a maker of personal computers and video games, said assembly operations have been relocated to increase efficiency and reduce costs.

- Washington, D.C.

#### SOFTWARE BLAMED IN SAUDI SCUD ATTACK

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The U.S. Army has disclosed that the Scud attack which killed a number of U.S. military personnel in Saudi Arabia during the Persian Gulf War succeeded because of faulty software. Had the replacement software arrived in time (it was reportedly delivered the next day), the Scud missile would, in all probability, not have made it through the otherwise near-perfect defenses presented by the Patriot missile system.

- Tokyo, Japan

#### 3-D LCD DEVELOPED BY NTT

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Incorporating a technology called a lenticular lens, NTT has developed a unique color display for computers and TVs. It is a liquid crystal display (LCD) capable of showing an image in three dimensions. NTT's three-dimensional display is designed to be used in computers, TVs, and TV phones. With this color display technology, 3-D viewing does not require the use of special 3-D glasses, as has been traditional since the 50s.

The lenticular lens, based on technology developed a year ago, is curved on both sides and has a LCD on the back. It projects an image which looks three-dimensional from all viewing angles. The display is 15-inches large, which is quite sizable for an LCD.

- Torrance, California

#### MITSUBISHI UNVEILS SUPER LIGHT

3.5 INCH DRIVE

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Mitsubishi Electronics America has announced the availability of its lightest 3.5-inch floppy drive, which has been designed for the portable computer market. The MF355E is a 2 megabyte unformatted (1.44 formatted), floppy disk drive that is 15mm in height, and weighs less than half a pound. The drive features downward read/write operation and power-saving options when the drive is in standby mode. The units are designed for use in laptop and notebook computers, where space and overall weight are crucial factors, the company said.

The company is also introducing the MF355S, a belt-driven 3.5-inch drive that has the same performance features as the MF355E, but is larger at 17 millimeters high, and heavier at 0.53 pounds.

- White Plains, New York

#### PRODIGY DROPS ITS ELECTRONIC GROCERY SHOPPING

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The home grocery shopping service, once heavily touted as one of Prodigy's main advantages, has been quietly dropped. Only 15% of the over one million Prodigy subscribers (one-third of whom use the system at least once a day) were able to participate in the grocery shopping network.

Prodigy's news, banking and brokerage services generate the most traffic with half of their members having Easy-Sabre accounts.

- Houston, Texas

#### HAND-HELD COMPUTERS FOR FOOT SOLDIERS?

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Texas Microsystems Inc., (TMI) has announced it has received a contract from the U.S. Army's Communications-Electronics Command (CECOM) to study the feasibility of pocket-sized computers for foot soldiers. TMI described the device as something that "could help revolutionize conventional ground warfare."

The pocket-sized unit slated for possible deployment in 1995 would weigh one pound and include some of the advanced communications and graphics capabilities found in fighter aircraft, tanks and other sophisticated weapons systems. The unit would be about the size of a cigarette pack and would probably use Intel's 80386 microprocessor.

Although details have not been finalized yet, one possible configuration of the unit would include a battery powered processor; a radio capable of transmitting both voice and data; a 'heads-up' display, which would project an image on a helmet visor or glasses; a microphone; a hand-held joystick-like device; and a global positioning system, which would allow the user to pinpoint their exact position at any time.

- New York, New York

#### LOTUS PROMISES FALL SHIPPING OF 1-2-3 MAC

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Nearly 4 years after its initial announcement, 1-2-3 Mac will ship this fall, according to an announcement by Lotus Development Corporation. The Macintosh version of the popular DOS-based 1-2-3 spreadsheet, which has sold 14 million copies, will be fully compatibility with version 7.0 of the Macintosh operating system and will make use of Apple's Data Access Language for accessing data stored in corporate mainframes, mini-computers, and departmental servers. Lotus had also added 3-D graphics and new capabilities to the Macintosh version. 1-2-3 for Macintosh will cost \$495.

Lotus also said that Lotus 1-2-3 for Windows will be available this summer.

- Tokyo, Japan

#### NINTENDO TIES UP WITH PHILIPS ON SUPER-FAMICOM'S CD-ROM

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In a surprise move, Nintendo has signed with Philips to develop a CD-ROM system for Nintendo's best-selling game machine, dubbed "Super-Famicom." Philips will manufacture the CD-ROM drive unit, and Nintendo will market the product in Japan and the U.S. next summer. Industry experts had expecting Nintendo to sign with Sony since Sony developed the sound system for Super-Famicom. With the new CD-ROM drive system, the quality of game software for the Super-Famicom is expected to increase.

- Tokyo, Japan

#### OPTICAL LASER DISK BREAKTHROUGH: USING "GREEN" LASER

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Hitachi has developed a device which emits a laser capable of producing an optical disk with three times more memory storage than conventional optical disks. It is called a green laser, based on its color. The 5-inch disk can hold whopping 1,500 megabytes of data.

The wave length of Hitachi's latest green laser is half that of the current infrared semiconductor laser. With this short wave, more detailed lines can be drawn on the disk.

- Cupertino, California

NOT EVEN APPLE CAN WIN THEM ALL

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In a suit filed against two former executives for allegedly misleading statements they made about the company's ability to build its own hard drive for Apple's failed Lisa microcomputer in the early '80s, damages were awarded that could total as much as \$40 million.

After Apple's Lisa computer was discontinued, shares fell 70% in value, and the company abandoned work on the drive before it reached market.

As a matter of interest, the Lisa is still being sold by at least one company, Sun Remarketing Inc., of Logan, Utah. The company now sells it complete with Macintosh Plus emulation software, 1 megabyte of RAM, and a hard drive.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE!

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As a reader of STReport International Online Magazine, you are entitled to take advantage of a special DELPHI membership offer. For only \$29.95 (\$20 off the standard membership price!), you will receive a lifetime subscription to DELPHI, a copy of the 500-page DELPHI: THE OFFICIAL GUIDE and over \$14 worth of free time.

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The 20/20 Advantage Plan IS FANTASTIC! And it features 20 hours online for just \$20 a month! The \$20 is a monthly fee that covers your first 20 hours online via direct dial into one of DELPHI's two direct-access lines, or via a special Tymnet 20/20 Access code. It also gets you additional hours at just \$1.20 per hour. And you get free access to several services on DELPHI as part of the Advantage Perks.

Other telecom services may have additional charges. Canadian Tymnet users have an additional telecom charge. Office Time access (7 a.m. to 7 p.m., weekdays) may have an additional charge. And of course, other restrictions may apply. But this is still an amazing deal!

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> STR Portfolio News & Information  
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Keeping up to date...

THE ATARI PORTFOLIO FORUM  
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On CompuServe

by Judith Hamner 72257,271

Atari Support reports that they have a new phone system. Because of the change there is a new phone number for Portfolio support. Call (408) 745-2004 during normal business hours Pacific Time.

Jim Straus 70116,667 is continuing development of his outliner. Jim is still asking for feedback and suggestions. A demo version is available in Lib 1. David Stewart is also continuing work on his 60 column word processor. David is moving to Oklahoma and intends to devote more time to Portfolio programming.

External storage for the Portfolio is still a hot topic. See message 12837 for information on the Flashdrive, a 20 meg battery operated portable drive. Portfolio drivers for the Flashdrive are in the Library. Ira Adams reported on his experiences with the Interloop interface for the HP floppy drive. A new upload this week, PDD2.ARC gives us another controller for the Radio Shack Portable Disk Drive 2. This new program is superior to previous offerings. Program and docs are available in PDD2.ARC.

See message 12798 for John Feagans report on the summer CES in Chicago.

Atari has granted permission to have the Portfolio File Manager available in the Library. This software ships with all new units on the File Manager/Tutorial card. If you don't have it, be sure to check Lib 1 for FM.COM.

Don Messerli has upgraded his PG Show file viewer for PGC graphics. PGSH21.ZIP is the filename for version 2.1 which is 20% faster than the previous version. Another new upload, CBASE.ARC, offers a way to use the Port for data collection. Lists of questions for others to answer are stored in .adr format.

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:HOW TO GET YOUR OWN GENIE ACCOUNT:

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To sign up for GENie service: Call: (with modem) 800-638-8369.

Upon connection type HHH (RETURN after that).  
Wait for the U#= prompt.

Type: XTX99587,CPUREPT then, hit RETURN.

\*\*\*\* SIGN UP FEE WAIVED \*\*\*\*

The system will now prompt you for your information.

-> NOW! GENIE STAR SERVICE IS IN EFFECT!! <-

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> The Flip Side STR Feature  
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"STalker 3.0 "...IT IS AWESOME"

A LITTLE OF THIS, A LITTLE OF THAT

=====

by Michael Lee

From RMORROW about the new version of STalker - from Delphi...

I received an updated beta version of STalker this evening and I've got some news for everyone - IT IS AWESOME. Everything that was ever talked about has been added:

Support for ports (Normal Serial, MIDI, Printer PLUS the TT/MSTe's additional Serial Ports, MegaTalk (from Gadgets by Small), DC-Port, & MT C Shell type),

Automatically sensed Zmodem (EXTREMELY configurable receive and send options including 16 or 32 bit)

VERY POWERFULL Script Language Support (C-ish BackTALK compiler)

...and of course many features NOT found in any other terminal program -- Multiple STalker's for multiple online sessions, Background transfer (STalker is a Desk Accessory so GEM background transfers work quite well), Unique communication with STeno text editor .ACC/.PRG for the ultimate capture/edit/type ahead buffer, Remote BBS mode and many, many more.

STalker v3.0 isn't release yet because STeno is currently being upgraded to go with it (the current version of STeno works fine) and Gribnif is striving for the ULTIMATE when they release THEIR first release.

All of the above isn't to be taken as a press release or official information but as my personal knowledge (now yours) and opinion. If you have seen STalker/STeno advertised and just wondered what kind of terminal program it would be if you purchased it, don't worry about it ---> purchase it (especially if you have a hard drive) and soon you will find a nice storage place for those OTHER terminal programs that other people consider to be the BEST (but aren't).

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From Lee Seiler (Lexicor) on CIS...

...I organized Lexicor and have spent in excess of \$200,000 developing a line of software...which I think you will see has some merit. When I first started, I felt that there were enough people using Atari [systems] so that if we produced something useful and well designed, we would be able to make a reasonable profit.

...While I am not sure about how well we will do here in the USA, I can tell you that we will do very well in Germany and most of Europe. The reason is very close attention by the numbers of these people to protect their own best interest.

...taken as a whole The ATARI market is really quite good and developers who do approach the new machines understanding what the ATARI market is should do just fine.

From Lee Seiler (Lexicor) about some of his new products - from the ST Roundtable on Genie...

Rosetta 3D is just one of five main applications which make up a full house graphics work station. Rosetta 3D is a program which translates an assortment of object and picture files in to formats that can be used on the ATARI. That is all it does.

Our other programs do other things such as create 3D animations add special effects, and render in 24bit color out to NTSC devices like VCRs and genlocked ATARIS.

...we are shipping product as fast as we can get it packaged and we will be unveiling our 24 bit color card for the ST very soon now. It uses the Intel 34010 graphics chip. It has its own screen RAM and outputs a super clean NTSC signal for direct connection to VCR or Genlock.

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Question about hard drive cables from Kenneth G. Goutal on CIS...

I have a 1040ST with the Atari SH204 hard disk drive. The cable that came with it is about 1.5 feet long. This severely limits where I can locate the disk drive relative to the system/keyboard box. Is it possible to get a longer cable? Will a longer cable work? (i.e. is the protocol length-sensitive?)...

Answer from Greg Wageman on CIS...

Because Atari didn't provide for termination on the DMA port, the cable length is VERY CRITICAL to proper hard disk operation.

If you lengthen it, you will likely run into trouble with unreliable disk operation. Longer cable lengths result in more noise and ringing, and at the speed of the DMA port, this becomes a real problem. Don't lengthen the cable. In fact, even daisy-chaining more than two (three if you're lucky) DMA devices is a problem.

Reply from Paul LeFevre (Antic) on CIS...

I have to disagree - perhaps I've just been lucky, but I have a 3 1/2 foot DMA cable running from my DMA port to the hard disk, and have never had any problems with it. It's a standard 19 pin D connector - check out Radio Shack, and make your own cable!

Reply from John Davis (Sysop) on CIS...

Our local dealer...sells DMA cables that are 3 ft. in length. I got one for one of my customers, and he's been running on it for about 2 months (with a Megafile 30) with no problems. It's fairly expensive (about 20 bucks), but almost necessary if you want to use a Megafile with a 520 or 1040.

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Questions about the SST and ISAC boards from Ed Stuckey - from the ST Roundtable on Genie...

Does the SST have an FPU and if so, what size. I use Dynacadd a lot and could benefit from your product.

Will the SST board fit under the ISAC board? If I use both the SST and ISAC boards, will there be a strain on the power supply. (I have the BEST power supply installed).

Answers from George Richardson (Merlin Group) - from the ST Roundtable on Genie...

FPU doesn't come in sizes, the 68881 & 68882 are both 32 bit, but the 68882 has some enhanced abilities. We use the 68882, but the ordinary version of Dynacadd doesn't recognize it. You'd need the TT version, unless they revise the ST version.

The ISAC & Moniterm boards both fit & will work with the SST, although the part of the board to the front of the Mega must be lifted slightly (\*very slightly\*) to clear the DRAM SIMMs on the SST. No real problem.

Using the SST & the ISAC board is guaranteed to overload the supply. We'll have a supplementary supply that you can use for these circumstances.

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Some clarification about ICD's Host Adaptors - From Cat. 4, Topic 39, Messages 46 & 49 - from the ST Roundtable on Genie...

Question by J.ROY18...

There has been a lot of talk on Fido Net recently about ICD HA's. Some people say they are too slow to format 1:1 and are really ragging on them. Others say it will format most drives to 1:1 fine but some drives are too slow and need 2:1. What I gather is this:

ICD HA 2:1 only

ICD Advantage HA (AdSCSI?) 1:1 on drives that can handle it

ICD Advantage Plus HA (AdSCSI+?) No mention from anyone...

Can someone give me some correct information? I'd like to know if I have to upgrade my ICD HA to a newer AdSCSI or something in order to take advantage of the LPS52S I hope to buy soon.

Answer from Tom Harker (ICD)...

The discussion is really a result of propaganda from BMS on their BMS-200 host adapter. They have put a few extra ICs on their host adapter to cut a few nanoseconds from SCSI command overhead. This allows them to get 1:1 interleave with Seagate ST-277N and 296N drives which are slow on their command overhead. ICD host adapters take a bit more time and cannot usually do 1:1 with these particular Seagate drives. We have no problems doing 1:1 with nearly all other drives including other Seagate models.

Our software is also faster than any other so we more than make up for that even at 2:1 with the ST - 277N drives.

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Misc. comments from Jim Allen (FastTech) - from the ST Roundtable on Genie...

The TURBO20 is our new 20Mhz 68000 accelerator, the fastest accelerator currently available for your ST.

The JRI25 is John Russell Innovations' 25Mhz floating point add on board for the ST, the only FPU board available for the ST nowadays, and the fastest to boot.

The COMBO is the combination of the two above mentioned products and

forms the best solution to date for Dynacadd customers that don't want to update to the Atari TT computer. And the COMBO fits in 520s and 1040s...at least most versions.

A user expressed some concern about the reliability of the 20mhz 68000 chips since they were being pushed past the manufacturers stated ratings...

How I test them [16mhz 68000] to know which is reliable and which isn't reliable - is proprietary. You will just have to trust me. I wouldn't go out and start selling them if I weren't quite confident in its reliability.

If you need to understand it, then read up on the performance limits of the chip. Things like operating temp range, junction temp-vs-operating speed, and the affect on critical timing factors with increasing temperature.

The whole matter of pushing things beyond their limit, this particular limit, is just science, not voodoo. My distributor is aware of what I'm doing, has consulted Motorola on it, and accepts back the "under qualified" as returns. If this was destructive to the chips, they wouldn't do that. More over you'll find that some of the testing that goes on at Motorola during testing pushes chips to their limits, and beyond, in an effort to seek out weaknesses.

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From Larry Rymal - from the ST Roundtable on Genie...

...if you want a good education on monitors, buy the June 1991 issue of Computer Shopper. Although there is a lot of "VGA" talk, items such as dot pitch, contrast blooming, frequency requirements, shadow masks are covered. This is an excellent issue.

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From Randy Noak - Cat. 16, Topic 2, Message 134 - from the ST Roundtable on Genie...

May I suggest that anyone that needs paper for DTP call 1-800-272-7377, and ask for PAPER DIRECT's catalog. They have some very neat stuff in there.

They are also having a contest in conjunction with Desktop Communications magazine. Best stuff wins the big prize (a feature in the magazine) but every entry gets a free one year sub to the magazine! Wouldn't it be great if someone using an Atari with Calamus or PageStream won?

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About speeding up the loading of Pagestream - From George (JMGSOFT) Cat. 14, Message 52, Topic 32 - from the ST Roundtable on Genie...

Note that when Pagestream starts, it goes and loads up all the import and export modules in the PSOTHER folder. Since each one of these is loaded by a PEXEC, they are in effect little programs. What does this mean, you ask?

It means you must set the fast-load bit on EACH of these modules. (Assuming you're using TOS 1.4 or greater w/o pinhead). Once the fastload bit has been set on each and every module, the load time will be quick like you would expect.

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From George Richardson (Merlin Group) on Genie...

The SST will require page mode 1Mx8 or 1Mx9 simms. Although you can configure the SST for various speed memory, the best results are to be had with 80 nanosecond or faster DRAM. These are the type of SIMMs that are the most common, and used in both Macs and PC clones.

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Experiences with getting a good multi-sync monitor - from JAKOB (John B.) on the ST Roundtable on Genie...

...After reading all of the past messages and comments, I narrowed my choices down to the NEC MultiSync 3D and the Princeton UltraSync. Mainly because I was trying to save a little money, I decided to go with the UltraSync. I poured through the ads in Computer Shopper and the lowest confirmed price I came up with was \$519. I got the UltraSync early last week, proceeded to gut my Monitor Master and rewired it with a DB9 submini in place of one of the Atari monitor jacks and then plugged everything together.

To put it simply, the mono performance disappointed me. The color modes were very sharp and bright, much sharper than the Atari monitor. Looking at a 50% black on white dither pattern, the dots are very distinct and easily discernable, whereas on the SC1224 you get color artifacts. However in monochrome, although all text (including the small 6x6 icon text) is very readable, it is not nearly as sharp as the SM124, which is surprising considering the bandwidth on this monitor is rated at 45Mhz and the dot pitch .28mm.

I tried everything I could to clear it up, like wiring the shields differently and changing the terminating resistors in my switchbox, but with no luck. Maybe I'm just spoiled by using the SM124 for over 5 years but I found the UltraSync to be unacceptable for monochrome use.

Another thing that really bothered me about the new Princeton, the power regulation was awful. Just flipping between menus would cause the display size to flutter. Opening a window from a blank desktop would cause the display to grow very noticeably. The aspect ratio in the center was also noticeably different from on the edges, although this may have just been an internal adjustment.

Friday night I went over to a local computer store and they were kind enough to let me rent a Nec Multisync 3D, with the rental fee deductible if I decide to purchase the monitor. As I sit typing this in monochrome, I find the 3D to be superb in every way! Everything about this monitor is top-notch, including the styling. Color modes are at least as sharp and bright as the Princeton, while monochrome FAR surpasses it. Although it still does not QUITE equal the Atari monochrome, (after all this IS a color monitor), I'd say it's as close as you can get with a color monitor.

The sizing and position controls are behind a drop-down door on the front of the monitor. Since this is a microprocessor-controlled monitor, instead of a knob, there is a pair of small pushbuttons for each control (Vpos, Vsize, Hpos, & Hsize), with each very legibly labelled on the inside of the door. All settings are permanently stored in the monitor's memory, and there is also an additional

memory that can be recalled with a slide switch right next to the pushbuttons. If you are using one of the pre-programmed video modes (ie.CGA, EGA, VGA, Mac, etc.) the monitor will automatically use those settings, otherwise it uses the user-programmed settings.

Therefore, you can just preset each of the two memories to color and monochrome modes and when you switch resolution, just flip the memory switch, and the monitor resets all the size and position controls for you for a perfect display. No fiddling with knobs every time you change resolution! It IS possible to set up the controls so that you use the same settings for mono and color, but the image ends up a bit off-center.

To sum up, I am VERY happy with the 3D, and the Princeton is going back on Monday. Like I said, the Princeton IS very nice in color, and is also very readable in mono, just not sharp enough for my tastes.

PS. The Princeton I got was the Ultra 1400. According to the FCC certification enclosed with the monitor, the newer Ultra series (1200, 1400, & 1600) is made by a company called Flextronics, in Singapore. Apparently, they are not up to the quality of the original UltraSync.

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Until next week.....

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```
*****  
*  
*      NEW  ---->  "BLACKJACK PLUS 3 BASIC"          <-- NEW  *  
*  
*      UPDATE -->  "BLACKJACK PLUS 3"  Version 1.2  <-- UPDATE  *  
*  
*****
```

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Atari ST (Color & Mono) suggested retail: \$39.95  
IBM PC & compatibles (EGA/VGA) " " "

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UPDATE --> "BLACKJACK PLUS 3" Version 1.2 <-- UPDATE

Atari ST (Color & Mono) suggested retail: \$89.95  
IBM PC & compatibles (EGA/VGA) " " "

=====

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casino blackjack program available anywhere! So, we have added  
even more advanced features, expanding your ability to set up  
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You may specify:

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Programmable running count  
Selectable true/exact count adjustments  
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You always have the option to:

SPLIT ANY PAIR  
DOUBLE DOWN (according to casino rules you set)  
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You can lower or eliminate the casino's odds by practicing the game. Learn why you have lost, and how to win next time!

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AUTO - play is automatic, by chosen strategy  
FEEDBACK - you are informed of mistakes in play  
BACKGROUND - test strategies quickly (100 hands-8 seconds)

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> UNIX!! STR FOCUS  
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What is UNIX and X Windows?

TAKING A LOOK AT UNIX, ATARI & ALTERNATIVES  
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by Richard Covert

SPARCbook 1 - An Alternative To TT030 UNIX

The UNIX workstation is a rapidly growing market which Atari Corp hopes to tap. This article is a pre-review of a new notebook sized SPARC workstation being developed by Tadpole Technology of Austin Texas. The SPARCbook 1 is an example of a modern UNIX X Windows workstation using the Sun Microsystems's SPARC RISC processor. I will discuss where the TT030 falls short of the state of the art with respect to UNIX X Windows workstations and hopefully will encourage Atari Corporation to improve the design of the next TT class computer.

This review is based upon preliminary literature received from Tadpole Technology and from several telephone conversations with Ann Gearding of Tadpole Technology. I have received NO official announcements of the UNIX/X for the TT, so the information in this article has been collected from various on-line computer services, and magazines. First I would like to explain briefly what a UNIX X Windows workstation is and why it is important.

What is UNIX and X Windows?

UNIX is a multitasking operating system originally developed by AT&T Bell Labs in the late 1960s. Multitasking simply means that you can execute many programs simultaneously. AT&T is currently shipping UNIX System V (pronounced FIVE) Release 4 (SVR4). Atari Corporation calls their implementation of UNIX X Windows ATX. Base UNIX uses a command line interface with limited graphics (basically character graphics such as would display on an old IBM PC). Thus, base UNIX is NOT user friendly. But, base UNIX is VERY portable, and programs adhering to the AT&T Libraries are portable to many platforms. X Windows is an addition to UNIX (or other operating systems) which is being developed at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.). X Windows is currently at Release X11 Release 4. X Windows is a set of function calls which allow consistent manipula-

tion of graphic devices such as graphics terminals, mice, plotters, etc. Programs adhering to the current X11 documentation are portable to any platform which has X11 implemented. Thus, low level X11 programs would be IMMEDIATELY portable to new workstations such as the TT030/ATX. But, X11 is a VERY low level interface, which does not provide high level functions such as a window with all attached buttons. To provide high level functions you need to use either MOTIF or OPEN LOOK.

MOTIF and OPEN LOOK provide high level functions to open fully sizable windows, create desktop environments and create consistent user interfaces to programs. Both MOTIF and OPEN LOOK have style guidelines, which describe a strict look for the user interface. Thus, programs have a consistent user interface, and are easy for a new user to learn. But, it is important to remember that MOTIF and OPEN LOOK both require X11 and are additional layers on top of X11. OPEN LOOK is an interface developed by SUN MICROSYSTEMS for use on their line of X11 workstations. MOTIF is an interface developed by the Open Software Foundation (OSF) and is used on the IBM RISC System 6000 workstation (amongst others). Thus, a X11 workstation in the USA MUST offer X11 Release 4 as well as either OPEN LOOK or MOTIF.

One major hurdle with UNIX/X Windows is that applications must be recompiled for the target machine. AT&T is attempting to setup an Application Binary Interface (ABI) standard for SVR4. The ABI would mean that any program compiled for SVR4 would run on any SVR4 platform using the same CPU. For example, if WORD PERFECT were compiled for the HP 9000 UNIX/X Windows workstation running the 68030 CPU AND SVR4, then the SAME executable would run on say an Atari TT030 running SVR4. If this standard appears, then niche computers such as the TT030 would have immediate access to many hundreds of high quality applications. But the ABI standard has been finalized yet, and so that is off into the future.

Currently, the best that a TT030/ATX user could hope for is that the many public domain 'C' and 'C++' programs would compile correctly. There are many fine programs, such as replacement desktops, small applications, and even a fine Chess game, available for X Windows computers. Most are available for free download from INTERNET/USENET or from GENie at a cost. Thus, ATX should be mainly directed at the home hacker, or the serious developer. In fact, the official development tools are the Free Software Foundation's implementation of the ANSI 'C' compiler, and the 'C++' compiler. These are called GNU C and GNU C++. FSF is an organization headed by Richard Stallman which believes in free software, and all of the FSF software includes the complete source code. Thus, TT030/ATX MUST include the source code to GNU-C and GNU-C++ as well as the executable code. By the Way, GNU stands for GNU's Not Unix, which is an inside joke!! As of this time, there are NO commerical development tools announced for ATX. In fact, the other commerically available development package for the TOS OS on the TT030 is the Lattice C package from HiSoft in England.

#### The SPARCbook 1 By Tadpole Technology

The SPARCbook 1 is, simply put, a complete UNIX X Windows workstation implemented as a notebook sized computer. The SPARCbook 1 uses the SPARC RISC cpu developed by Sun Microsystems for the SPARC workstations. Below are some of the preliminary specifications of the SPARCbook 1:

PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS ARE LIABLE TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE  
UNTIL VERSION 1.0 OF THE SPECIFICATION IS RELEASED.

- o SPARC 25 MHz RISC Processor core
- o Ethernet, modem, and SendFax hardware are standard features
- o Advanced Disc Peripherals
- o High resolution VGA screen and support for external display
- o UNIX SVR4 and MS-DOS emulation
- o Conformant with emerging SPARC Compliance Definition 2.0

#### Standard Hardware

Processor L64811 SPARC IU 25 MHz  
 L64815 SPARC MCT 25 MHz

Cache 64Kb direct mapped, Zero wait state  
 Optional 25 MHz Floating Point Unit

Memory L64850 64 bit DRAM Controller  
 8 Mbyte (4 Mbit technology)  
 32 Mbyte option (16 Mbit technology, 120 Mbyte  
 Disc Systems and above).

Display 640 x 480 Backlit Paper White LCD 64 Gray Scales displayable

Keyboard 82 key Notebook Style Keyboard with integrated Mouse-key

Storage 720Kb/1.44 Mbyte 3.5" Floppy Disk  
 62/120 Mbyte formatted 2.5" 22mS Winchester Disc

I/O External Color Video Output  
 RS232 Serial I/O Port (for printer/modem support)  
 Parallel I/O Port (Centronics compatible)  
 Ethernet Interface IEEE 802.3  
 Modem Interface with SendFax capability  
 External power supply (supplied)

Battery Internal removable NiCad 2.5 Hours operation (worst case)  
 12V 2.8 AH 3.5 to 4 hours operation  
 2 Hour fast recharge from Power Supply

Dimensions 11.8" x 8.5" x 1.9" Magnesium alloy case

Weight 6.9 lbs including batteries and all peripherals

#### STANDARD INTEGRATED SOFTWARE

AT&T UNIX SVR4 Operating System with X11 R4,  
 runs X-based conformant SUN-OS 4.1 applications.

80386 DOS Emulation - Insignia SOFT-PC with hardware  
 VGA graphics

Modem and Ethernet Communications support. MS-DOS 4.01  
 included.

#### What The SPARCbook 1 Specification Means

The specs mean basically that you are getting a X11 workstation which is rated at 18 MIPS (about 4 to 10 times the speed/power of the TT030) which runs any SUN OS 2.0 Applications as well as MS DOS applications and MS WINDOWS 3 applications. And you are getting it in a notebook sized

format!!

#### The SPARCbook 1 Advanced LCD Screen and External Display

The SPARCbook 1 notebook includes a high performance paper white 640 by 480 resolution CFL side-lit display. The display is a low power monochrome LCD display, incorporating fast response crystal technology to minimize screen "drag effects". Up to 64 gray scales are simulated using the SPARCbook 1 graphics controller.

Color output is available by using an external RGB VDU (not provided) to display 640 by 480 VGA or 800 by 600 resolution (non-interlaced) with 16 colors from a palette of 4096. System software provides modes to run SUN-based software requiring an 1152 x 900 screen without modification.

#### The SPARCbook 1 High Capacity Disc Peripherals

A high capacity notebook winchester disc drive is used in the SPARCbook 1 design. The SPARCbook 1 uses low power 2.5" industry standard devices to initially provide 60 or 120 Mbyte (formatted) of disc storage.

A conventional 3.5" floppy drive is provided as an alternative to Ethernet for system and applications software loading and backup. Standard DOS and UNIX Disc format up to 1.44 Mbyte are supported.

#### The SPARCbook 1 Networking Support

The SPARCbook 1 has fitted as standard an Ethernet Interface (IEEE 802.3) 15 way interface to an external transceiver. A software user interface is included to allow the user immediate access to compatible networking services without an understanding of UNIX or the underlying technology.

#### The SPARCbook 1 Modem

A high performance modem is included as standard. The modem is a full implementation supporting 2400 baud data transfers compatible with CCITT V.29, V.22bis, V.22, BELL 212A, and 103 standards. In addition the modem supports Sendfax capability at 9600 baud for Standard Group III FAX implementations. Full software support for the modem and Fax is available.

#### The SPARCbook 1 I/O Capabilities

- o Serial I/O Port (to 38.4K baud asynchronous) for external printer or modem support.
- o Parallel I/O Port (Centronics compatible)
- o CRT interface (RGB analog color)
- o External Mouse input

#### The SPARCbook 1 UNIX Software Implementation

A full implementation of AT&T UNIX System V Release 4 (SVR4) is provided, configured on disc. This operating system provides full System V Release 4 functionality including TCP/IP networking, NFS support, X Windows 11 Release 4 graphics support and OPEN LOOK. The SPARCbook 1 will be certified by SPARC International to the SPARC Compliance Definition 2.0 (SCD 2.).

DOS Emulation (developed from Insignia Solutions Soft-PC 386) is provided,

running as a Task under UNIX. This implementation takes advantage of the SPARCbook 1's hardware VGA to provide a high-performance emulation of DOS, allowing the user to run existing PC applications including MS WINDOWS. The entire SPARCbook screen is dedicated to either DOS or UNIX output at any one time, while the UNIX OS remains active at all times. An MS-DOS 4.01 license is provided.

#### How The SPARCbook 1 Compares to the TT030

##### PRICES

First, you might well think that we are talking about two different price ranges here. But the SPARCbook 1 configured with 8 megs of RAM and a 60 meg hard drive retails for under \$6,000. Here are the tentative prices for the TT030 as previously announced by Atari USA:

TT030 2/50	2399.95
TT030 4/50	2799.95
TT030 8/80	3799.95

ATX 1600.00 rumored to include a 200 meg hard drive, but can not be confirmed as Atari USA has not released any official prices for ATX yet.

PTC Color Monitor 549.95

Thus, a TT030 8/80 with ATX and 14" color monitor totals the same \$6,000 MSRP. Now, you may argue that you won't pay MSRP for an Atari computer, but then you might not have to pay the MSRP for the SPARCbook 1 either. So, actually, both the TT030 equipped with ATX and a color monitor retails for the SAME PRICE as the SPARCbook 1! Furthermore, I am using the SPARCbook 1 as a typical example of the SPARC clone workstation. Other SPARC clones may be priced less than the TT030/ATX combination.

##### FEATURES

Since the TT030 isn't Class B certified yet, and since ATX hasn't been officially released (or even announced) the price and features of it are not known. But, from rumors and from announcements from various shows it appears that ATX will have the following features:

- o AT&T SVR4
- o MOTIF
- o X11 Release 4
- o GNU pd C,C++ compilers

##### OPTIONS:

- o Ethernet VME card with software

##### Editorial summary

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I have owned and thoroughly enjoyed Atari computers since my first 800XL almost ten years ago. I make my living programming in C on UNIX workstations and thus awaited eagerly the TT030/ATX workstation. But the recent, and consistent, decline of the Atari market has made me very leery of future Atari products.

None the less, I still need to purchase a UNIX X Windows machine in the next 6 months, and an Atari machine would allow me to use my existing software. But, I simply must reconsider based upon these following observations and comparisons of the TT030/ATX vs. the SPARCbook 1.

- 1) TT030 does not support 1.44 Mbyte floppies.
- 2) TT030 does not provide a MS DOS emulation as standard. Several MS DOS hardware based emulators are available but whether they would work under ATX is not known.
- 3) TT030 does not provide a data/fax modem as standard.
- 4) TT030 is not a notebook sized computer.
- 5) Slow 16 MHz buss, with 32 MHz CPU.
- 6) How does the split between ST RAM and TT RAM affect the operation of SVR4 UNIX? SVR4 UNIX is a virtual memory OS which means that processes may be swapped from RAM memory to hard disk transparently as required by the OS. My concern is that since 4 megabytes of the 8 megabytes of RAM in a TT030 8/80 machine is slower ST RAM, does UNIX use it, or the faster TT RAM, or both? Using only the ST RAM would slow UNIX, while using only the faster TT RAM would mean MANY MANY swaps to disk. Thus, since not all 8 megabytes of RAM are the same the split between ST RAM and TT RAM would have big system impacts on SVR4 on the TT030. Resulting in a slower machine!!
- 7) Where are the ATX applications? Since they must be recompiled for the TT030/ATX machine, will companies like Word Perfect bother to support the TT030/ATX machine? If not, then where do you get ATX programs for the TT030?

The SPARCbooks does offer many reasons to purchase it:

- 1) compatible with SUN-OS 2.0 software allowing the use of hundreds of professional applications.
- 2) compatible with SUN-OS OPEN LOOK allowing the easy porting of hundreds of X Windows public domain programs and desktops
- 3) Builtin data/sendfax modem
- 4) Builtin 1.44 megabyte floppy
- 5) Builtin MS DOS emulation
- 6) Built-in Ethernet interface allowing the SPARCbook1 to be linked to an Ethernet network immediately!!
- 7) Up to 32 megabytes of RAM. With a fast SPARC MMU!!
- 8) Very fast 25 MHz RISC processor. Most probably 4 to 10 times faster than the TT030/ATX machine.

For me, the most important requirement for my next machine is that it run either OPEN LOOK or MOTIF under UNIX. Both the TT030/ATX and the SPARCbook 1 meet this requirement. But the TT030 fails to provide a 1.44 megabyte floppy, it lacks an Ethernet interface, has limited graphics, and doesn't offer UNIX yet. Even when ATX does become available the cost of a UNIX based TT030 is so close to the SPARCbook 1 as to make it unattractive to me. Additionally, my future employment will most likely involve programming on Sun SPARC workstations, so the SPARCbook 1 would be more

likely to help me remain employed then would an Atari TT030. Also, since the SPARCbook 1 is a notebook sized workstation I could use it both at home and at my client's location. This too would be a big advantage. Also, since Atari USA has lost any market penetration with the ST, and since the cost of the TT030 is as high as most 80386 based machines, I don't see major UNIX applications being ported to ATX on the TT030. So, you won't see Word Perfect 5.1, or Interleaf, or other major UNIX/X Windows based applications appearing on the TT030. In fact, the TT030's future, with regards to new software, looks just as bleak as the ST's past!!

But, the SPARCbook 1 has a builtin MS DOS emulator thus allowing the immediate use of many existing DOS programs. Since the availability of new ST/TT software is not certain, MS DOS emulation is a definite advantage.

This article is intended to give STReport's readers an idea of an alternative to the TT030 if you need UNIX and X Windows. While the specifications of the SPARCbook 1 are still subject to change, they should be equivalent to those of other SPARC workstations. In fact, a California company named RDI has announced a SPARC workstation which includes both MS DOS and MACINTOSH emulators. So, the UNIX workstation market is a very competitive market in which I don't believe the TT030 will succeed. Especially without better features then found in the TT030. The lack of some binary compatibility with other UNIX X window workstations limits your choice of X Windows applications. The small Atari presence in the USA almost guarantees few new ATX applications.

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> ATARI IS #1! STR Feature      "...he got rid of his Mac for an Atari ST!"  
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DOING WHAT THE OTHERS COULDN'T!  
=====

part II

by Dana Jacobson

Ever wonder why comic books, especially the early ones, are worth so much money? It's because most of them are no longer available, and the master copies of them were never kept so they cannot be reproduced as "2nd editions". How then, you may ask yourself, can we purchase hardcover editions which contain these original comics, starting with the first copies?

As you may have read in last week's issue of STR, Rick Keene is an artist, and much of his work is done on the ST. Among his talents is cartoon work, some of which he put into comic book format. He learned from

various sources that DC Comics was interested in restoring their early works, specifically their Superman comics. Rick had an idea as to how these comics could be restored to almost their original form. After all, without the original artwork in some case, it was not to be an easy task. To hear Rick talk about it, it seems easier than most would think.

What Rick had read/heard from various comic book journals was that DC Comics was interested in restoring these old issues. They didn't have the means to do it themselves; or at the least, all they had were theories. One of the first ideas they had was to "farm" out the work and see the results. What happened was people would buy up some old issues, cut them up (i.e. destroy them!), and then bleach out the pages to get all the colors and "age-stains" out, resulting in cleaning up the pages. The resulting pieces would get recolored and pasted back together. Very sloppy, to say the least. Also, what about those issue where an entire comic couldn't be obtained, or were incomplete due to pages missing, etc.?

To Rick, it seemed that a lot of great and valuable comics were being destroyed with the end result being very poor quality reproduction. The processes being used were barbaric. He decided to enlighten DC with modern technology. He put together a videotape of some of his graphics and animations along with a letter explaining what he proposed, and sent it off to see if they wanted to digitise their comics. After all, think about it. All of the original comics were worn with age, if not lost. It was all on paper. With the computer, all of the artwork, pages could be stored on magnetic media for retrieval at any time - no loss of quality!

Rick didn't get a reply, or his tape back. About six months later Rick decided to send another batch of work. This time, he sent out work done in black and white. He discovered, quite by accident, that he could reproduce the colored comic pages without the color! The process involves scanning with certain settings and other 'secrets' that Rick won't divulge, but once he figured out what he had done and perfected the process he figured DC might be more interested than earlier. He took an old Batman comic panel, "removed" the color, and sent it in. He also explained the benefits of using the computer, especially playing up the storage angle and other benefits of computer technology. This time he got the attention of DC Comics and his calls were returned. Their only complaint was that the output of the laser printer was still rough; it wasn't good enough as is. So Rick played around with the panels some more, smoothed out the work. After some more samples were submitted, the third one got results. They told Rick that they were now useable, finally. They then told Rick that "we need 40 pages done - soon. Can you get the job done?"

The end result can be seen in the "Superman Archives - Volume II". I haven't seen Volume II yet, but I do have Volume I. Rick explained that there is quite a noticeable difference in quality between the two books. The first was done with the "washed-out" process while Rick's 40 pages were done with the Atari ST. I'm waiting to get my hands on the second volume! Although the book's acknowledgements state that Rick's work was "recolorizing", Rick explained that there was a lot more to it than just that. Changes in editors led to some confusion as to what Rick's role actually was. In fact, a lot of those pages were not only recolorized, but reconstructed from partial pages, panels, dialog balloons, etc. Some of the artwork had to be redrawn from scratch or reconstructed from bits and pieces remaining!

Future work with DC Comics is up in the air at the moment for many reasons. First of all, even with all of the computer equipment that DC

has they cannot get the results that they want. Another factor is that DC is currently reorganizing their personnel and priorities. Contrary to what most people think, comic books are not drawn at the company and then published. The work is done outside by contracted artists. The company does all of the rest by putting it all together, publishing the books, and the marketing. They don't have time or manpower to do the things that they'd like to do, which is to come out with many more "archival" books of their past comics. Seeing another great opportunity, Rick has continued to keep in contact with DC with the hopes of being part of this bigger project. What DC is hoping to do is mass-reproduce about 40 books all at once, and publish them all at the same time! What this would involve would be contracting out many people to do the work, an almost herculean task. The most obvious problem with this mass reproduction is quality control. Very few of these books are going to look the same with regard to quality. It would seem more appropriate to do one or two at a time, by the same artist/company. DC has, however, contacted Rick to come down and meet with the folks at DC again, and give a presentation. Details of this meeting are still up in the air until DC can finish with their internal reorganization before any final decisions can be made. Still, Rick has a lot to be optimistic about; and he's anxiously awaiting to sell his ideas once again.

What amazed me, and probably DC comics as well, is that most of the work Rick has done for DC was done with an upgraded 520 ST and various other hardware, ST-related. The point is that DC Comics is aware of the abilities of the Atari computer; they have seen the results and are very happy with them. The company is very choosy when it comes to their books. According to a message Rick left me on one of the onlines, "DC's Marketing would like Atari to be more aggressive in their advertising in DC's magazines. The Lynx is already there but they would like Atari to advertise their computers also. My point is that DC's Marketing is more aware of the Atari media and they're reading more Atari-specific magazines. For example, a xerox of the ST Informer interview with me and the pictures of Robin [Batman & Robin] was left in DC's marketing office just last week. The head of marketing said that he saw that when he was in Chicago a month earlier. When asked what was being done, his reply was: 'It's going through channels.' I'm not sure what that means except that it could mean that Atari and DC are working out some kind of print advertising arrangement."

So, it seems that Atari has managed to score the admiration of a new market because of the strengths of a machine that most would claim had many limitations. I asked Rick why the Atari and not something like perhaps the Macintosh for this work. After all, it would seem a place like DC Comics would expect it; and Rick is familiar with the Mac. He told me that the ST was his first choice. It was easier and much more enjoyable to use. He feels comfortable with an Atari than with the Mac. Using the Mac seemed to be too "mechanical". You could spend thousands of dollars on hardware and software, and really not be sure that the results were going to be what "someone" like DC would want. It appears that DC wants more than just mechanical. "Superman", or any of the other characters in the DC collections are almost like family. They want that personal touch which Rick feels can be accomplished better with the Atari. He does the work while the machine is one of his tools. With the Mac, for example, it would almost be the opposite.

Until Rick learns what his future partnership with the Superman (and Batman) archives will be, he continues to run his company and taking on new projects. Next time we'll take a look at another aspect of his work.

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> ASDE STR InfoFile  
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GEOGRAPHY TUTOR V3.2

GEOGRAPHY TUTOR V3.2 PRESS RELEASE  
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ASDE Inc.  
151 rue Jolicoeur  
Hull, Quebec  
CANADA J8Z 1C8  
Phone: (819)770-7681 Fax: (819)777-6330  
Compuserve: 72417,3026 Genie M.ROCHON

GEOGRAPHY TUTOR is the only ELECTRONIC ATLAS available for the ATARI ST/MEGA/TT line of computers. V3.2 is now shipping with completely updated maps and data bases for every country in the world.

The software has been upgraded and now includes full zoom capacity on any area of any map as well as the ability to save maps to disk and to print any data by country or by category. An animated display of the earth globe can also be superimposed on any of the maps. Also added are full descriptions of any data element with source and definitions.

A map and data base of the MIDDLE EAST is now part of the basic program as well as the previously included:

- 1) WORLD
- 2) AFRICA
- 3) EUROPE
- 4) NORTH AMERICA
- 5) CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA
- 6) THE STATES OF THE U.S.A.

Loading and saving data bases has been speeded up and is now approximately 3 times faster than in pre V3.0 versions.

All registered owners can upgrade their program at the same time as the data bases and maps for a fee of \$10.00 which includes all mailing costs. Send your original disk together with a cheque or money order (U.S. funds)

New maps and data bases of AUSTRALASIA, THE CARIBBEAN, and SOUTH EAST ASIA can be purchased for a special one time price of \$5.00 if they are ordered at the same time as the upgrade.

The program can be ordered directly from ASDE Inc. at the above ad-

dress for \$39.95(u.s.) including all mailing costs.

#### SOME NOTES ABOUT GEOGRAPHY TUTOR:

The first version of this program was released in 1988. Since then it has undergone 3 major upgrades. Data bases and maps have been updated 4 times to keep all information current.

The program is distributed in France (French Version) by UBI SOFT which has sold more than 1800 copies of the program in 18 months. In the U.K. the program is distributed by GRALIN INTERNATIONAL. A German language version of the program is also available.

The program has been reviewed extensively and always very positively in the ATARI Press and on line magazines. It has been demonstrated at the two last WAACE fest, ATARI WORLD show in Los Angeles, BOSTON ATARI FEST, TORONTO ATARI FEST, LONDON (U.K.) 16 BIT FAIR and other ATARI special shows and demonstrations.

Writing in RESET (Vol 1 Issue #3 P14-15)

Bob Thompson gave a very good review and pointed out in particular the "excellent user interface".

The program was very thoroughly reviewed in the Jan/Feb 1990 issue (Vol. 10 No. 1 p.54-56) of Current Notes. Bill Moes the author of the review, concluded

"an extremely well designed program that offers help to students from 5th grade through college. It's easily used and, with the supplemental disks available, amazingly open-ended."

Atari St User in the United Kingdom, published a short overview of the program in its September 1990 issue p.82 It concluded ..

"Geography however is fun and educational".

In the same issue, a list of the top 30 P.D. or DEMO ST software was published. GEOGRAPHY was listed first in that section.

The November 1990 issue of Start magazine, reviewed the program fully and was very positive. The review is subtitled:

"Travel The World Without Leaving Home"

Some of the highlights of that review follow:

"Geography Tutor is GEM based, so it is easy to use. To make it even easier, there are always instructions at the bottom of the screen that tell you what to do next. The manual is well written and includes screens shots to help you navigate through the programs various features."

"One of the more powerful features of Geography Tutor is the ability to compare one country with another. For instance, you can color all the countries on the screen on the basis of doctors per capita. Or look at which countries have Islam as their major religion. You can easily switch back and forth from this graphical representation to a list of the countries ranked by their value or alphabetically."

"Geography Tutor lets create your own separate databases or modify and update the ones that come with the program. There is also room for up to four notes of your own that can be added to the database for each country or state. These notes don't have to be text, they can also be DEGAS compressed pictures -- a picture of that country's flag, or a map of one of the cities for instance."

The April issues of ST Format and ST User (U.K.) both contained short positive reviews on the new versions of GEOGRAPHY TUTOR.

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> Serious Overviews STR Spotlight        "...What's Atari waiting for?"  
=====

ATARI - A STUDY IN ITSELF!  
=====

by Ed Krimen

I've been an Atari ST user for 3-1/2 years. I started out with a 1040ST, color monitor, and 9-pin printer. I bought it for writing for school with the intention to do telecommunications and drawing later. 6 months later, I bought a modem and it hasn't been the same since. I now have a 4meg STe, NEC Multisync 3D, Quantum 105meg hard drive with ICD host adaptor in an ICD case, and a Supra 2400 modem. But, enough with the sappy introduction....

I'm really not sure what's going on in the world of Atari. I look to the on-line magazines, ST Informer, and now AtariUser for info, plus various networks. The networks provide the user's point of view. The magazines are also effective information because they try to explain what's going on behind the scenes. I have the strange feeling that Atari is like a circus behind the scenes. On the surface, it seems like any other corporation: the people who answer phones at Customer and Technical Support are very friendly and responsive. Yes, Atari has returned my calls.

On the other hand, its actions demonstrate the amateurism that the magazines don't necessarily express explicitly. Sure, we have MegaSTe's shipping. TT's are Trickling in, Too. STe's are in abundance. Research and Development is alive and well; we have an ST Notebook in the wings with an ST Pad (STylus) close behind -- or so they say. Software seems to be picking up too, especially with Goldleaf importing high-end applications from Europe, ISD and SoftLogik updating their fantastic programs. The situation seems to be pretty rosy....

...but it isn't. Why do I know the situation the way it is? Because I try to keep up to date in the Atari world. I make an effort to do so. The problem is that the non-Atari users don't and shouldn't have to make

the effort to know what's going on. Why should they know what's going on? Well, I would think that Atari wants to sell a lot of computers, and people aren't going to buy something they don't know exists. Actually, I sometimes wonder if Atari's goal is to sell computers. I've heard stories that their production plants only produce a small fraction of what they're capable of producing.

So what's Atari waiting for? Christmas? Perhaps. But it's not Christmas of this year, or next year, or the following year. My guess is that it's Christmas of 1995 or later, if ever. As with all corporations, Atari has their "plan." They're going to wait and wait and wait until the time is right to push their computers. The vast majority of people out there don't know what they'd use a computer for, so why try to sell them one now? Computers must get smaller, cheaper, and more powerful. The interface must be easier, without a bulky keyboard. Speech recognition is a ways off, but apparently, handwriting recognition is closer than we think, or so they tell us. These easy-to-use interfaces are necessary so that the masses will at least begin to feel comfortable with computers.

This is where the ST Pad (or STylus) comes in. Its simple-to-use, pen-input interface could be the answer that would get more people to buy computers. There's still the problem for what they're going to use it. Writing notes, memos, forms -- perhaps, but not with a \$2,000 computer. Eventually, though, the price will come down, thanks to Atari's low-cost production.

However, when you hear about pen-based computers and interfaces, you hear about Go Corp. and sometimes Window's pen-interface. But you wouldn't hear about Atari and its STylus, even though it was shown at CeBit, one of the largest computer fairs in the world, in Germany where Atari has a strong presence. (Actually, I don't even think Atari should have showed it. It's not ready to be shipped, so why show it? We don't want to see something that we can't have for several months.)

The same thing can be said for the Portfolio. Recently, HP introduced a palmtop which included Lotus-123 built-in. It looks very similar to the Portfolio, but it got much more press than the Portfolio. NBC even did a lengthy segment of the HP on their Nightly News, giving HP credit for inventing the palmtop. Certainly Atari didn't invent the palmtop (DIP of the U.K. designed the Portfolio and Poquet has their own palmtop), but they could have milked a little more of the credit for it. This is Atari's responsibility and no one else's. HP was at best third with a palmtop on the market, with Atari and Poquet coming out with one at similar times. If one was to get exposure for his product, he doesn't sit on his duff. The press in general isn't like '60 Minutes' where they actively investigate the stories. The stories in the ordinary press must be given to them, and then they may investigate to find more information, or just use what was given to them.

This is the press release's function. They should be packed with more information than the press can use. And preferably without a lot of spelling errors like the glossy MegaSTe and TT brochures. The beauty about press releases is that they're far cheaper than commercials. The press will distribute the information for you to the masses in the form of news. I'm sure this is what HP did when they released their palmtop; they sent information to NBC, which then featured it in a long news story on their Nightly News.

I majored in telecommunications (video production), not public relations, in school. Atari doesn't need me telling them what to do (maybe they

do). I'd hope they'd have professionals who've been working for a few years in the field knowing how to promote the computers (maybe they don't).

What Atari needs is enthusiasm. The company is hardly representative of its users. Look what happens when you get a few enthusiastic, successful users in there: Bob Brodie, Bill Rehbock, and others who have actually known what an Atari computer is and can do before they worked for the company. Atari needs employees who just don't work for them, but employees who know the value of and love Atari computers. They need employees who want to see the computer survive and succeed. Look at users on GENie, Usenet, Fidonet, Fnet and Freenet. Look at Atari user groups! Atari would not be here today if it wasn't for those users and user groups supporting the Atari computers.

I've used everything from MS-DOS to Windows to the Macintosh IIIfx and always prefer using the ST. I often wonder why the ST doesn't have support like the other computers do. There are a variety of reasons, and piracy isn't one of them. I'm absolutely NOT condoning piracy, but there's a lot more piracy in the MS-DOS and Mac market, and you don't see them struggling. The main issue is that there isn't enough of a user base for a Microsoft or other large company to invest in the relatively small ST user base. If Atari users want more third-party support, the user base must increase.

The way to increase the user base is simple from the user viewpoint: (1) tell a great deal of people about the power and affordability of the ST computers and (2) get the computers to them. Atari users have been telling Atari Corp. for years that the company must advertise. This is not news, and Atari apparently doesn't listen; if you do listen, Atari, lets here from you. In "Ogilvy On Advertising," a virtual bible on advertising, David Ogilvy of Ogilvy and Mather, one of the leading advertising agencies in the world, says in chapter 16, "What should you do in times of recession, when you need every penny to sustain your earnings? Stop advertising?" "If you stop advertising a brand which is still in its introductory phase, you will probably kill it -- forever. Studies of the last six recessions have demonstrated that companies which do not cut back their advertising budgets achieve greater increases in profit than companies which do cut back." Moreover, in chapter 9, he states, "You cannot rely on \*short-term\* advertising to turn the tide of hostile public opinion in your favor, to boost the price of your stock, or put a halo around your reputation." "Most corporate campaigns are short-lived because they don't start with any clear objective, and because research is not used to track their progress." Finally, he says, "Corporate advertising can improve the morale of your employees; who wants to work for an outfit that nobody has ever heard of? It can also make it easier to recruit better people, at all levels."

As I stated, the second part of the issue is getting computers to the people who want them, and if Atari does indeed advertise, then people WILL want them. Mass market is the key here. You must make it very easy for the common person to obtain an Atari computer. Since there is a lack of dealers in the US from which to buy an Atari computer, mass merchandisers are the answer. Now, which computers should they stock? I think the STe and MegaSTe should be stocked by the mass merchandisers. Yes, I know the dealers don't like to hear that, but with a lack of dealers, this is the only way to get a lot of computers to a lot of people.

The STe and MegaSTe are the home and business computers, respectively. The MegaSTe MUST get out to the public in large numbers because

it's such a powerful machine at a good price, whereas the STe is the perfect machine for the home. I DO NOT think however that the dealers should be ignored. How about giving the greater discount to dealers instead of the mass merchandisers? Therefore, the dealers could have the benefit of having the lower price and attracting more customers. The TT MUST be sold to none other than the authorized dealers because it requires dealer support, which the STe and MegaSTe do not. Moreover, the dealer network should be developed to include a larger number of better-informed dealers. I am saddened to say that there are a lot of dealers who don't know what they're selling and couldn't help a TT user in need. If I'm going to buy something for \$2,000 or more, I had better get good answers to my questions, and I shouldn't have to look any further than the person who sold it to me. If the person can't answer my questions, then they shouldn't be selling the product; it's that simple.

In this age of inexpensive modems and computers, there's absolutely NO reason why Atari cannot better support its dealers either through a dealer specific BBS or roundtable on GEnie. Furthermore, with the mass market shipments of computers, there should be included in the box a list of authorized Atari dealers in the US. I don't mean a complete list of places that sell the Lynx and Portfolio, but a list that only has dealers that carry STe/MegaSTe-related products. If I buy an ST computer, I don't want to know where I can get a Lynx and Portfolio. The list should be a master list of all the dealers in the US -- not a regional list, because we all know how things get messed up and before you know it, people in Florida will get a list of dealers in California, and that's not the way it should be. This list should also be constantly updated. When one buys a computer, they shouldn't receive a list that's a year old; of course, recently updated lists would be available from Customer Relations, and this fact must be mentioned on the list. Finally, I think that a free Atari magazine subscription would be quite beneficial and a necessity to the new user.

Here's a relevant anecdote: I consulted a new ST user for the past few months. He had just bought a used 1040ST and wanted some help with it because he didn't know how to use it. One of the first questions he asked me was if Atari was still in business. Another question he asked was if Commodore and Atari were one company. It certainly seems that way sometimes, doesn't it? Too bad Atari's stock isn't where Commodore's is. He is an example of a person on the outside, just coming into the inside. He was totally oblivious to the Atari world, knowing nothing about the company or the computer; he only bought the computer because it has MIDI ports and he was going to write his own MIDI software using ST Basic. (AAK!!) He didn't even know how to program, but was willing to learn.

Take this test: try to go a week without touching or using your Atari computer (or just imagine doing that). Observe all the news Atari gets in the mass media. Go to your local bookstore. Read the newspaper. Watch TV. Hear no Atari, see no Atari. Pretty pitiful, isn't it? Well, this is what the common person gets exposed to. They don't know about Atari, if it's dead or alive, if it still makes arcade games <grin>, or what. This is completely Atari's fault, despite the incredible, tremendous effort of the users, user groups, and people like Donald Thomas who want to spread the word.

If Atari wants to become a big player, and I don't see why they shouldn't want to play with the big boys, they're going to have to sell a lot of computers and impress a lot of people. Their appearance at CEPS was very commendable and impressive, but a high-end niche isn't going to solve the problem. The high-end market demands a lot of support, and

Atari and its developers are in no position to provide that kind of support yet. To impress and to get into a situation that can provide support the high-end market needs, Atari must sell computers. That's the bottom line. To sell computers, people must know about them. And right now, people don't know about Atari computers. People can't and will not buy what they don't know about.

I don't know what difference my prose will make, but I hope it does indeed make a difference. What I've said has been said before many times by many people. If you would like to reach me, I just got a shiny, new GENie account: E.KRIMEN. I welcome all praises and flames. <grin>

EDITOR NOTE:

Ed sent in this essay in response to our request for reader opinions and views concerning the future of Atari and what may be done to help.

Hats off to Ed for a fine piece of work!

Next week, we will present a host of reader mail sent to STReport in response to our call for reader input.

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> STALKER/STENO STR InfoFile  
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GRIBNIF SOFTWARE RELEASES

Gribnif Software Press Release

June, 1991

GRIBNIF SOFTWARE WILL NOW CARRY  
STRATA SOFTWARE'S STENO(TM) AND STALKER(TM)  
SOFTWARE FOR THE ATARI ST/TT

HADLEY, MA

Gribnif Software announces that effective immediately they are taking over all marketing, distribution, support, and promotion of Strata Software's STeno(TM) and STalker(TM) software products for the Atari ST.

Gribnif will release new and enhanced versions of these programs, which when combined with Gribnif's effective marketing and strong support will give these excellent packages the market recognition that they deserve.

First to be released will be a new version of the STeno text editor.

This powerful GEM based text editor makes any text editing job a breeze and includes features normally only found in more expensive word processors.

This will be followed by the release of a brand new and powerful version of the STalker terminal program. This new version will combine a powerful script language, terminal emulations, new transfer protocols, and GDOS support, making it one of the most powerful terminal programs for the Atari ST/TT.

STalker and STeno are trademarks of Strata Software. Exclusively marketed and distributed by Gribnif Software.

GRIBNIF SOFTWARE RELEASES  
NEW STENO(TM) TEXT EDITOR  
PROGRAM FOR THE ATARI ST/TT

HADLEY, MA

Gribnif Software is proud to announce the immediate release of a new version of the STeno(TM) text editor for the Atari ST/TT, recently acquired from Strata Software.

This amazing GEM based text editor runs as both a desk accessory or stand alone program. It is fast, easy to use, and incredibly powerful. It even includes features normally only found in more expensive word processors.

STeno also has the impressive ability to display its entire menu set inside its own window. This allows complete access to its drop-down menus while running STeno as a desk accessory. Other features include the ability to interact with the popular STalker(TM) terminal program and the NeoDesk(R) 3 desktop replacement.

The program is being released with the low introductory price of \$29.95. It is available directly from Gribnif Software or through normal Atari software dealers and distributors.

STeno and STeno are trademarks of Strata Software. Exclusively marketed and distributed by Gribnif Software. NeoDesk is a registered trademark of Gribnif Software.

For more Info Contact:

Gribnif Software  
P.O. Box 350,  
Hadley, MA 01035  
Tel: (413) 584-7887  
Fax: (413) 584-2565

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"BLOCKBUSTER ATARI NEWS - ALWAYS FIRST!"

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- Sunnyvale, CA

ATARI SELLS OFFSHORE FACILITIES

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The factory has been sold. BUT...consider this,,, Atari sold the factory and that's good. Here's why; Atari no longer must face the cost of maintaining the buildings, salaries etc.. They have only contractual agreements to adhere to which means added profits. Atari has made a fine business decision, they sold the facilities and now contract for the production of Atari products.

- London, UK

GST TO SUPPORT PUBLISHER ST & 1ST WORD PLUS

-----

GST Holdings has initiated a programmer's group to update and support First Word Plus (WordWriter) and Publisher ST (Timeworks DTP). First Word Plus, a fine word processor that is closely related to WordWriter ST, will be supported with updates and refinements. Publisher ST, the close cousin to Timeworks DTP, will also be fully supported and updated. These two programs add to the variety of affordable application software being made continually available to Atari ST users.

- St. Louis, MO

PAGESTREAM 2.0 TO DEBUT AT VANCOUVER

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PageSTream 2, the anxiously awaited update to the already powerful and very popular Desktop Publishing solution for the Atari ST computer platform, is scheduled for debut and release at the upcoming Vancouver Atari Computer Show. This very powerful release version will include 10 Compugraphic Fonts plus 8 Soft-Logik fonts. All fonts used by PageSTream 2 are scalable to printer and screen. Most fonts are scalable up to 183,000 points in .01 point increments. Additionally, this new version will import most all word processor formats and graphics formats, has its own spelling and hyphenation dictionaries, draws objects with box, line, ellipse, arc, polygon, Bezier curve and freehand tools. This solution prints to dot matrix, ink jet, laser and Postscript compatible printers. This folks, is an update that makes a very positive statement about the future of Atari. The time frame for registered users to upgrade will be extended thus, affording everyone an opportunity to upgrade. And... please remember; its made in the USA!

- Sunnyvale, CA

FSM GDOS TARGET DATE -> AUG 1, 1991

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Atari's FSM GDOS, the new, scalable GDOS that Atari has been feverishly developing for use with the new line of computers and TOS, now has a tentative release date of August 1st. Seems a few more 'undocumented' features have appeared.

- Jordan, MN

AlberTT - VME Video Board Released!

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A New VME product! AlberTT VME based for the MegaSTE & TT. 1024x768 (16 colors out of 4096). Optional 800x600 or 640x480. Works with Lexicor software and made by the designer of the Viking Moniterm and Color ISAC, Jay Craswell. Pricing has not been set in stone yet. Dover is now taking advance orders for the initial production run. By the way, this is NON-Interlaced output. Unlike the VGA cards for the PC. This is ROCK SOLID! No flicker. Rio Datel advertises they have a 1024x768 monitor for \$500.00. Atarians now have a compatible and affordable monitor. And.. the AlberTT production units will have a flying Palette widget that allows clever programs to display more than 16 colors at once (Ala Spectrum 512). For further Information Call or write:

Dover Research  
321 West 4 St.  
Jordan, Mn. 55352  
(612) 492-3913

P.S. Dover is still selling the ISAC for Megas.

- Chicago, IL

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CES -> LYNX - PORTFOLIO - JAGUAR

The ELECTRONIC VIDEO GAME MARKET has seen SOMEWHAT OF A SLOWDOWN IN GROWTH due to the mild recession and by so-called 'market saturation'. However, Atari Corp. indicated its experience is "quite the opposite" to the current trend and is looking forward to continued growth this year in sales of its highly popular, hand-held 16-bit Lynx system.

Last year Atari sold almost a half million Lynx machines worldwide, and for 1991 they expect to do even better. In fact, Atari fully expects to sell everything they make." Lawrence Siegel, president of Atari Entertainment Division, said Atari's Lynx was well positioned in the market in "a carefully chosen niche" and supported by some 22 game titles, with 15 more to be introduced during the trade show.

"By year end, there will be 50 games out there for Lynx," Siegel said. Siegel mentioned that he anticipates Nintendo's new Super NES system will sell more than a million units this year. But, at the same time, he also believes the market share it will claim will be mostly from Sega's Genesis.

Siegel said Atari is developing "a new, powerful family of console products. Among which the 'Jaguar' is tentatively planned... "but introduction of the new products won't be until 1992 and will depend on market conditions." The executive also said sales of the company's

Portfolio palmtop computer continue to show increased strength.

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> STR Crystal Ball

BIG SHAKEUP IS AFOOT!

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RE-ALIGNMENT - LAYOFFS - BELT TIGHTENING  
CONSOLIDATION

"THE IDES OF MARCH IN JUNE?!?"

The CRYSTAL BALL is glowing WHITE HOT! Could it be true?

Is there going to be anywhere between a 30-50% layoffs?

IS... "HE BACK IN CHARGE?"

Is there really going to be a consolidation of subsidiaries?

Are there to be DEMOTIONS, TITLE CHANGES, MORE WORK-NO RAISES?

Second Generation TT030 "The Real Thing" @ 01/01/92 >FALCON<

No "TAMALES OR MAPLE LEAVES" just one big bag of tricks?

"DOWN UNDER" being throttled back?

What do you mean; YOU DON'T LIKE RIDDLES!

How about; "TV STARS FINISH LAST!"

Yo Adrian! We ain't talkin' about the Johnny Carson show!  
For the whole story ..... stay tuned!!

---

> Hard Disks STR InfoFile

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\* SCSI EMBEDDED CONTROLLER MECHANISMS \*

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SGN2055	105mb 17ms	3.5"	Y QUANTUM 719.00
SGN6277	120Mb 24ms	3.5"	Y 789.00
SGN1296	168Mb 24ms	3.5"	Y 1019.00

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....Napolean Blown-apart

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